



MONTANA STATE HOSPITAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

SOCIAL ASSESSMENT (Initial, Interim, Annual and Forensic)

Effective Date: November 7, 2003

Policy #: SS-01

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I. PURPOSE: To outline a systematic process for gathering pertinent social information about each MSH patient to use in assessment, treatment, and discharge planning.

II. POLICY:

- A. Obtaining accurate social information in a timely manner is crucial to the assessment, treatment, and discharge planning process at MSH.
- B. Social workers will prepare an initial social assessment document within seven (7) calendar days of admission for each patient admitted to the hospital for the first time. An interim social assessment will be completed within the same time frame for each readmission. For long-term patients, social assessment information will be updated annually.
- C. Information compiled in the routine social assessment process will be used with other discipline assessments to formulate recommendations for treatment and discharge. At any time during the patient's hospitalization, additional information may be added to the social assessment as an addendum.
- D. All social assessments become a permanent part of the medical record. Upon readmission, copies of the initial and most recent social assessment will be made and sent to the ward file.

III. DEFINITIONS:

- A. Social Assessment is a document completed by a social worker providing historical and current information on key facts of an individual's social environment and his/her relationship to it.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. Social Worker is responsible for completing social assessments and updates according to time frames mandated by MSH policy.

- B. Social Work Discipline Chief is responsible for reviewing completed social assessments for quality and timeliness of all Social Worker staff and providing training, consultation, and supervision on a regular basis.
- C. Team Leader monitors Social Assessments to ensure they are completed per MSH policy.

V. PROCEDURE:

A. Initial Social Assessment:

1. Preparation: The intent of the social assessment is to corroborate information gathered by other professionals and to provide pertinent additional information. Guidelines for preparation follow.
 - a. Review social information obtained in the preadmission, nursing and psychiatric assessments.
 - b. Identify potential sources of information. These may include, but are not limited to patient, family members/significant others, close personal friends, and community treatment providers.
 - c. Obtain and send necessary release of information documents following hospital policy and Montana statutes pertaining to patient confidentiality.
2. Assessment Format: The social assessment document is divided into eleven (11) areas which move logically from identifying current information, through historical patient and family data, to conclusions and recommendations for treatment and discharge planning. See attached outline.

Sections devoted to current and historical information will present the facts, and will not include opinions or commentary.

- B. Interim Social Assessments: When patients are readmitted to the hospital, the same procedures will be followed to prepare the interim social assessment. Each topic from the initial assessment outline will be addressed, reviewed with informants and updated to reflect changes since the last discharge. See attached outline.
- C. Annual Social Assessments: For longer-term patients, the social assessment will be updated at least annually. Each topic from the annual social assessment outline will be addressed and modified to reflect progress and change since the date of the last social assessment. See attached outline.

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D. Forensic Social Assessments: For court ordered evaluations, the assigned social worker will work closely with the forensic psychiatrist and psychologist to obtain the comprehensive background information necessary for a forensic evaluation.

XII. ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Initial Social Assessment
- B. Interim Social Assessment
- C. Annual Social Assessment

_____/_____/_____
Ed Amberg Date
Hospital Administrator

_____/_____/_____
 Randy Vetter Date
 Social Work Chief & Admission Coord.